

Naturally Wonderful



Singletary Lake State Park



Fort Macon State Park



Pilot Mountain State Park

NORTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS *Naturally Wonderful*

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The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation is a division of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

John E. Skvarla, III
Secretary



Pat McCrory
Governor

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North Carolina's state parks are "Naturally Wonderful" and also wonderfully diverse. With 41 state park units, the system stretches from the highest sand dune on the East Coast at Jockey's Ridge to Mount Mitchell, the highest point in the eastern United States. Between these points, you'll find mysterious bay lakes, wild swamps, rare sandhills, piedmont river systems and bold mountain streams.

The parks system was established in 1916 when a group of citizens sought to protect the summit of Mount Mitchell. It became the first state park in the Southeast and among the first in the nation. Many of the state parks were initiated by local citizens with a strong conservation ethic.

More than 14 million people visit the state parks each year. The state parks system employs park rangers and park superintendents who are commissioned law enforcement officers.

Education is also a hallmark of North Carolina state parks. Rangers offer free interpretive programs that reveal the marvels of each park. Many parks have state-of-the-art visitor centers and exhibit halls to help you explore North Carolina's cultural and natural heritage.

Conservation, recreation and education are what North Carolina state parks are all about. A visit to any of them can show you why they're "Naturally Wonderful."



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Hanging Rock State Park



Chimney Rock State Park



Hammocks Beach State Park

Our Mission

The North Carolina State Parks System exists for the enjoyment, education, health and inspiration of all our citizens and visitors.

The mission of the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation is:

- to protect North Carolina’s natural diversity;
- to provide and promote outdoor recreation opportunities throughout North Carolina; and,
- to exemplify and encourage good stewardship of North Carolina’s natural resources for all citizens and visitors in North Carolina.



The North Carolina parks system’s Website at www.ncparks.gov gives complete information on each of our parks as well as programs of the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation. You’ll find maps that can be downloaded plus details on park facilities, fees, reservations and special outdoor activities such as cycling, kayaking and rock climbing. Contact information for each park is provided as well as an up-to-date calendar of educational programs and special events. Check it out before your visit.

We also offer specialized brochures for many of our parks. These brochures include park maps and describe facilities in detail as well as the unique natural and historic aspects of the park. Just contact the park office or our Raleigh office at 919-707-9300, or email us at parkinfo@ncmail.net.

About our parks...



In North Carolina, we like to call our state parks “Naturally Wonderful.” For us, this is more than a catch phrase. It indicates how we develop and manage our state parks and recreation areas.

It has to do with our mission statement on the facing page, which, in turn, evolved from our state’s constitution. Our principal mission is to preserve and protect the stunning natural resources in North Carolina. The Division strives to balance the protection of the more than 215,000 acres of parkland in our system while providing high quality outdoor recreation. We’ve developed these parks cautiously with this idea in mind. While there are myriad recreational opportunities, our mission demands relatively low-impact activities. We’ve been careful to arrange campgrounds and park amenities to complement, rather than compete with the natural features that attract so many visitors.

While visiting our state parks, you’ll find that fees for camping, swimming and other park activities are very reasonable. Early on, the people of North Carolina decided that the state’s array of natural treasures should be enjoyed by as many as possible. Enjoy your exploration of North Carolina’s state parks.

Please visit our Website for a complete list of new parks under development and other types of units, including our 20 State Natural Areas.



Education and Kids

Did you know that many plants atop Mount Mitchell are rare in North Carolina, but common in Quebec? Did you know that the giant sand dunes at Jockey’s Ridge are constantly moving? Do you know how to safely hold a crayfish? Interpretation & Education programs help reveal what makes North Carolina state parks *Naturally Wonderful*.



Discover More with a Ranger
From fishing lessons to astronomy programs, from tree identification hikes to guided canoe paddles—parks offer programs for all ages. Visit www.ncparks.gov for a list of upcoming programs.

Junior Rangers
Junior Ranger guides are geared for ages 6-12. Kids do fun activities and attend ranger programs to earn a special patch. Ask about the program at a park office or download the guide at www.ncparks.gov.



Environmental Education Learning Experiences
Parks have their own curriculum guides that tie science and social studies into hands-on field trips for schools. Many parks have exciting exhibit halls for self-guided discovery.

Reservation Information

A full-service, online- and call center-based reservations system can be used to reserve campsites, picnic shelters and other park facilities. Where reservations are offered, there are requirements for advance notice and minimum and maximum stays.

www.ncparks.gov

1-877-7-CAMPNC
(1-877-722-6762)

Park gates are locked each night when the park closes. So, plan accordingly when arranging your arrival time and when making daytime excursions outside the park.

Parks & Recreation Trust Fund

The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund provides support to improve the quality of life for North Carolinians by preserving the state’s natural resources and developing public parks and recreation facilities. Since its creation in 1994, trust fund grants have conserved more than 40,000 acres of state parkland and parks have been developed with new facilities such as visitor centers, campgrounds, improved trails, swim areas and educational exhibits. The trust fund is the primary funding source for adding to and improving state parks.

The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund also provides grant funds for local governments to improve recreation opportunities. Projects have included diverse recreation initiatives from playgrounds to community centers to greenways. Visit the trust fund’s Website at www.ncparks.gov/partf



Trails Program

The North Carolina Trails Program helps volunteers, nonprofit groups and government agencies plan, develop and manage greenways, routes for hiking, biking and horseback riding, as well as water trails and off-road vehicle trails. The program administers the Federal Recreational Trails Program, which provides grants to non-profit organizations and governmental agencies for a variety of trail projects. www.ncparks.gov/About/trails_grants.php



The trails program is also planning, promoting and developing a system of trails across North Carolina and the flagship trial for this statewide effort is North Carolina’s Mountains-to-Sea State Trail. The trail will connect the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to the Jockey’s Ridge State park when complete, a distance of some 1,000 miles. www.ncparks.gov/About/trails_mst.php

Support State Parks

The North Carolina state park store is the only online location for official state parks merchandise. We hope these items remind you of your visit. Take a moment to browse and remember. Your purchase helps to support our “Naturally Wonderful” state parks.

www.ncparkstore.com

Support North Carolina state parks with a license plate. There is a \$30 fee in addition to regular license fees (\$60 for personalized plates). Additional fees support the Friends of State Parks. www.ncfsp.org

Contact the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles to purchase a plate. www.ncdot.org/dmv/



Rules and Safety

We’re serious about safety. Follow these tips to make your visit to North Carolina’s state parks a safe and rewarding experience.

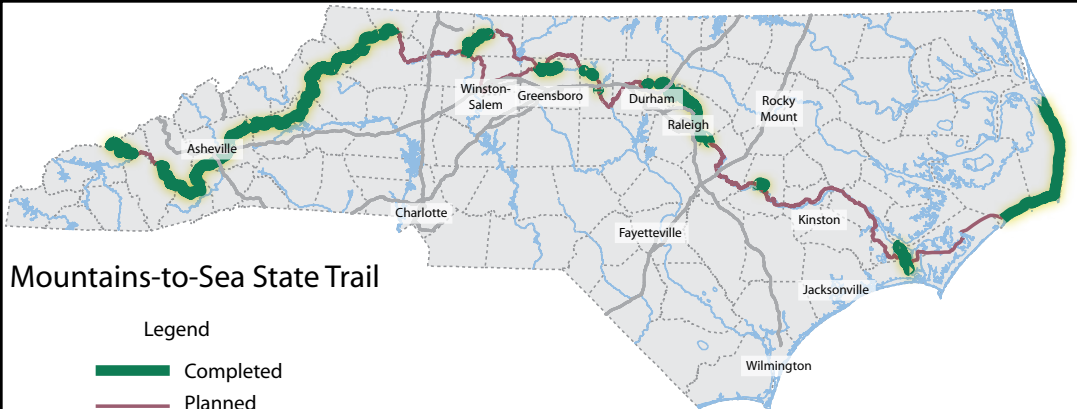
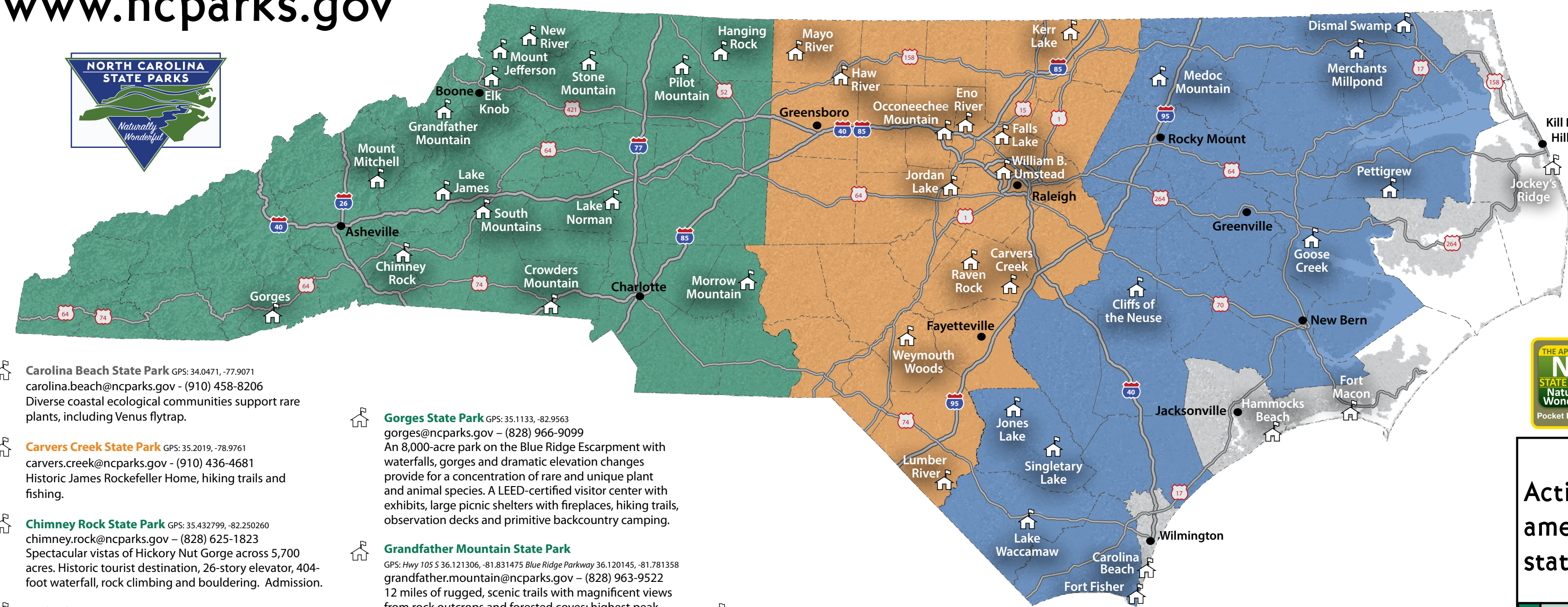
- ☐ Park speed limits are 25 mph unless otherwise posted. Watch for pedestrians, bicyclists and wildlife.
- ☐ Don’t swim alone or exceed your swimming abilities.
- ☐ Supervise children at all times and equip them with personal flotation devices when playing around water.
- ☐ Dress properly. Check with park staff regarding weather and terrain.
- ☐ Make your plans known to park staff and family members should you plan a long hike.
- ☐ Allow plenty of time for hikes as daylight hours shorten so you won’t be caught by darkness.
- ☐ Stay on designated trails and away from streams, waterfalls and cliff faces.

Here are some of the more common regulations for the protection of our parks and our visitors. Check with the park office for other rules pertaining to specific parks. A complete set of regulations is posted at the park office.

- ☐ Feeding wildlife is prohibited. Animals can be dangerous and carry disease. Report unusual behavior to park staff.
- ☐ The removal of any plant, animal, rock or artifact is prohibited.
- ☐ Areas managed by North Carolina State Parks are wildlife preserves. Hunting or trapping is prohibited.
- ☐ Pets must be on an attended leash six feet or less. Pets aren’t allowed in public buildings, bathhouses or swimming areas.
- ☐ Boating and fishing regulations of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission are enforced. Appropriate licenses for freshwater, saltwater and trout fishing are required.
- ☐ Firearms and other weapons are prohibited except that those with a proper permit may possess a concealed handgun in permitted areas & under the requirements of North Carolina G.S. 14-269 and G.S. 14-415.11. All firearms and weapons are prohibited in state park visitor centers and offices. Persons acting under this exception should take notice that certain Division managed properties are owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and subject to separate regulations governing firearms. Accordingly, concealed handguns are prohibited at Falls, Jordan and Kerr Lake State Recreation Areas.
- ☐ Fires are permitted in designated areas only.
- ☐ Camping is permitted in designated areas, by permit only.
- ☐ The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- ☐ Swimming is permitted in designated areas only.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS AND RECREATION

www.ncparks.gov



Mountains-to-Sea State Trail

- Legend
- Completed
 - Planned

The Mountains-to-Sea State Trail, an effort to link Clingman's Dome in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to Jockey's Ridge State Park on the Outer Banks, is the flagship project of the North Carolina State Trails Program. Today, over 600 miles of the 1,000 mile route are open for use. Partners across North Carolina are helping to plan and build the trail to link communities together and to serve as the backbone of a growing system of land and water trails. Visit www.ncparks.gov for more information.



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Activities & amenities in state parks		Camping facilities	Trails	Recreation	Education
		Drive-to tent camping RV, trailer camping Dump station Showers Backpack camping Canoe-in camping Group camping Cabins	Hiking, more than 5 miles Horseback riding Bicycling Rock climbing	Motors 10-horsepower or less Fishing Powerboat ramp Marina access Nonmotorized boat access Boat rental Swimming	Picnic shelter Visitor center Exhibit hall Historic site
Western	Chimney Rock				
	Crowders Mountain				
	Elk Knob				
	Gorges				
	Grandfather Mountain				
	Hanging Rock				
	Lake James				
	Lake Norman				
	Mount Jefferson				
	Mount Mitchell				
Central	Morrow Mountain				
	New River				
	Pilot Mountain				
	South Mountains				
	Stone Mountain				
	Carvers Creek				
	Eno River				
	Falls Lake				
	Haw River				
	Jordan Lake				
Eastern	Kerr Lake				
	Lumber River				
	Mayo River				
	Occoneechee Mountain				
	Raven Rock				
	Weymouth Woods				
	William B. Umstead				
	Cliffs of the Neuse				
	Dismal Swamp				
	Goose Creek				
Coastal	Jones Lake				
	Lake Waccamaw				
	Medoc Mountain				
	Merchants Millpond				
	Pettigrew				
	Singletary Lake				
	Carolina Beach				
	Fort Fisher				
	Fort Macon				
	Hammocks Beach				

Carolina Beach State Park GPS: 34.0471, -77.9071
carolina.beach@ncparks.gov - (910) 458-8206
Diverse coastal ecological communities support rare plants, including Venus flytrap.

Carvers Creek State Park GPS: 35.2019, -78.9761
carvers.creek@ncparks.gov - (828) 625-4681
Historic James Rockefeller Home, hiking trails and fishing.

Chimney Rock State Park GPS: 35.432799, -82.250260
chimney.rock@ncparks.gov - (828) 625-1823
Spectacular vistas of Hickory Nut Gorge across 5,700 acres. Historic tourist destination, 26-story elevator, 404-foot waterfall, rock climbing and bouldering. Admission.

Cliffs of the Neuse State Park GPS: 35.2354, -77.8932
cliffs.neuse@ncparks.gov - (919) 778-6234
Multicolored cliffs up to 98 feet tower over historic river. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

Crowders Mountain State Park GPS: 35.2127, -81.3006
crowders.mountain@ncparks.gov - (704) 853-5375
Two of the highest peaks in Kings Mountain Range, 20-mile views, streams and lake environments.

Dismal Swamp State Park GPS: 36.5057, -76.3551
dismal.swamp@ncparks.gov - (252) 771-6593
More than 14,000 acres of the Great Dismal Swamp. Part of the Underground Railroad. Bordered by the Dismal Swamp Canal.

Elk Knob State Park GPS: 36.332586, -81.69064
elk.knob@ncparks.gov - (828) 297-7261
Scenic vistas from more than 5,500 feet in elevation with rare and unique plant communities. Enjoy a picnic after a rugged hike to the summit. Visit on a snowy day to enjoy cross-country skiing or snowshoeing.

Eno River State Park GPS: 36.0783, -79.0050
eno.river@ncparks.gov - (919) 383-1686
Scenic wilderness corridor encompasses 14 miles of river, multiple cultural history sites, and an extensive trail system. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

Falls Lake State Recreation Area GPS: 36.0117, -78.6888
falls.lake@ncparks.gov - (919) 676-1027
Expansive reservoir and woodlands, habitat for diversity of animals, including American bald eagles. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

Fort Fisher State Recreation Area GPS: 33.9534, -77.929
fort.fisher@ncparks.gov - (910) 458-5798
Barrier island between Cape Fear River and Atlantic Ocean is home to rare and endangered coastal birds and sea turtles.

Fort Macon State Park GPS: 34.695250, -76.681145
fort.macon@ncparks.gov - (252) 726-3775
Restored historic fort that played a key role in Civil War, barrier island beach. Fort tours, Civil War reenactments or enjoy the beautiful beach.

Goose Creek State Park GPS: 35.481853, -76.901414
goose.creek@ncparks.gov - (252) 923-2191
Hardwood swamps and brackish marshes along the Pamlico River, oaks draped in Spanish moss.

Gorges State Park GPS: 35.1133, -82.9563
gorges@ncparks.gov - (828) 966-9099
An 8,000-acre park on the Blue Ridge Escarpment with waterfalls, gorges and dramatic elevation changes provide for a concentration of rare and unique plant and animal species. A LEED-certified visitor center with exhibits, large picnic shelters with fireplaces, hiking trails, observation decks and primitive backcountry camping.

Grandfather Mountain State Park GPS: Hwy 105 S 36.121306, -81.831475 Blue Ridge Parkway 36.120145, -81.781358
grandfather.mountain@ncparks.gov - (828) 963-9522
12 miles of rugged, scenic trails with magnificent views from rock outcrops and forested coves; highest peak at 5,946 feet. Home to 70 known rare/endangered species and 16 distinct natural communities. Adjacent to Grandfather Mountain attraction.

Hammocks Beach State Park GPS: 34.67261, -77.13945
hammocks.beach@ncparks.gov - (910) 326-4881
On mainland and islands; park operates a seasonal passenger ferry to ocean beach, maritime forests, salt marshes, tidal creeks. Sea turtle nesting site.

Hanging Rock State Park GPS: 36.411906, -80.254122
hanging.rock@ncparks.gov - (336) 593-8480
Rock outcrops at elevations up to 2,580 feet, five waterfalls, mountain lake, access to scenic river. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

Haw River State Park GPS: 36.250646, -79.756364
haw.river@ncparks.gov - (336) 342-6163
The Summit Center provides training facilities, environmental education opportunities and overnight accommodations.

Jockey's Ridge State Park GPS: 35.9642, -75.6330
jockeys.ridge@ncparks.gov - (252) 441-7132
Tallest living sand dune along U.S. Atlantic coast, barrier island ecology. Stroll along the sound or hang glide from a dune. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

Jones Lake State Park GPS: 34.682743, -78.595423
jones.lake@ncparks.gov - (910) 588-4550
Carolina bay environment, five-mile hiking trail through diverse habitats with lake overlooks.

Jordan Lake State Recreation Area GPS: 35.7369, -79.0169
jordan.lake@ncparks.gov - (919) 362-0586
13,900-acre reservoir, home to American bald eagles. Several areas for day-use or overnight recreation.

Kerr Lake State Recreation Area GPS: 36.4411, -78.3688
kerr.lake@ncparks.gov - (252) 438-7791
50,000-acre reservoir with 800 miles of shoreline spanning North Carolina/Virginia state line.

Lake James State Park GPS: 35.728710, -81.901123
lake.james@ncparks.gov - (828) 584-7728
Vistas of surrounding Black Mountains overlooking manmade 6,812-acre lake. Take advantage of the many recreation opportunities this lake has to offer.

Lake Norman State Park GPS: 35.6652, -80.9421
lake.norman@ncparks.gov - (704) 528-6350
State's largest manmade lake at 32,510 acres. More than 30 miles of biking trails.

Lake Waccamaw State Park GPS: 34.278985, -78.465485
lake.waccamaw@ncparks.gov - (910) 646-4748
One of the largest Carolina bays with unique plants and animals, including alligators.

Lumber River State Park GPS: Princess Ann 34.390023, -79.002225 Chalks Bank 34.8987, -79.3549
lumber.river@ncparks.gov - (910) 628-4564
State Nature & Scenic and National Wild & Scenic 115 miles blackwater river. Enjoy Griffin's Whirl, a unique reverse flow area.

Mayo River State Park GPS: 36.438800, -79.938171
mayo.river@ncparks.gov - (336) 427-2530
A visitor's center, hiking trails, picnic tables and a picnic shelter are situated near two fishing ponds. Call the park office for updates on new facilities.

Medoc Mountain State Park GPS: 36.2639, -77.8883
medoc.mountain@ncparks.gov - (252) 586-6588
Exposed rock outcrops, bluffs; steep topography, rocks, minerals unusual to piedmont.

Merchants Millpond State Park GPS: 36.437105, -76.701585
merchants.millpond@ncparks.gov - (252) 357-1191
Maze of towering bald cypress trees draped in Spanish moss dominates lake and adjacent swamp.

Morrow Mountain State Park GPS: 35.373724, -80.073477
morrow.mountain@ncparks.gov - (704) 982-4402
Mountains up to 936 feet, peaceful lake. These pinnacles are the remains of one of the oldest mountain ranges in the eastern United States.

Mount Jefferson State Natural Area GPS: 36.397660, -81.473466
mount.jefferson@ncparks.gov - (336) 246-9653
Panoramic views from scenic Blue Ridge mountaintop at 4,683-foot elevation. National Natural Landmark.

Mount Mitchell State Park GPS: 35.7528, -82.2737
mount.mitchell@ncparks.gov - (828) 675-4611
Highest peak east of the Mississippi at 6,684 feet, views up to 100 miles, North Carolina's first state park. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

New River State Park GPS: 36.467680, -81.340350
new.river@ncparks.gov - (336) 982-2587
Nationally designated Wild and Scenic and American Heritage River. It offers canoeing and hiking past scenic rock outcrops, farmlands and woodlands.

Occoneechee Mountain State Natural Area GPS: 36.060835, -79.116900
eno.river@ncparks.gov - (919) 383-1686
Over three miles of trail circle around the highest point in Orange County, providing beautiful views of the mountain and the Eno River.

Pettigrew State Park GPS: 35.4732.03, -76.2434.17
pettigrew@ncparks.gov - (252) 797-4475
Second-largest natural lake in state, old-growth trees, American Indian artifacts including second-oldest dugout canoe in U.S., plantation historic site and grave of Confederate general.

Pilot Mountain State Park GPS: 36.3432, -80.4623
pilot.mountain@ncparks.gov - (336) 325-2355
National Natural Landmark offering scenic vistas of Blue Ridge mountains. Canoe the Yadkin River as it flows for two miles through the park.

Raven Rock State Park GPS: 35.4597, -78.9127
raven.rock@ncparks.gov - (910) 893-4888
Landmark bluff that stretches 150-foot-high and more than a mile along the Cape Fear River.

Singletary Lake State Park GPS: 34.5831, -78.4496
singletary.lake@ncparks.gov - (910) 669-2928
Carolina bay environment, scenic lake vistas, undeveloped shoreline.

South Mountains State Park GPS: 35.5963, -81.6000
south.mountains@ncparks.gov - (828) 433-4772
Mountain peaks to 3,000 feet, 80-foot waterfall. Parts of the park were constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

Stone Mountain State Park GPS: 36.3873, -81.0273
stone.mountain@ncparks.gov - (336) 957-8185
Rock dome rising 600 feet above the valley floor, waterfalls, mid-19th century Homestead, Blue Ridge mountain views. Part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

Weymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Preserve GPS: 35.1469, -79.3690
weymouth.woods@ncparks.gov - (910) 692-2167
Longleaf pine forest; broad, flat valleys; rare and endangered species include red-cockaded woodpecker, pine barrens tree frog, bog spicebush.

William B. Umstead State Park GPS: 35.8905, -78.7502
william.umstead@ncparks.gov - (919) 571-4170
More than 5,000 acres of hardwood forest in urban Triangle region including creeks, lakes and extensive trail network with scenic overlooks.